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ABSTRACT

Washington State has implemented a policy requiring school administrators to give their subordinates the opportunity to appraise their performance. Based on survey research and mailed interviews, this study collected data on activities at the state level that served to implement this policy. Other research questions sought information on the extent and impact of local school district policies and practices that were consistent with the state policy. Results of the study indicate that: (1) none of the officials interviewed cited any activities at the state level that promoted implementation of the evaluation policy; (2) only 7% of the local school districts had adopted policies on appraisal by subordinates that included the requirements of the state policy; (3) only 22 to 29% of the school administrators were found to have complied with the requirements of the state policy by giving their subordinates the opportunity to appraise their performance; (4) school personnel in a position to evaluate the effects of the policy, when implemented, reported that it was beneficial for assessing administrator performance; and (5) elements of the strategy described in state policy do not insure changes in administrative behavior nor do they protect subordinates against reprisals by administrators. (Author/TJH)

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AN ANALYSIS OF A WASHINGTON STATE POLICY FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR EVALUATION BY CERTIFIED SUBORDINATES

by

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the implementation of a Washington state policy which requires that school administrators give their subordinates the opportunity to appraise their performance. The importance of this topic is suggested by research findings that indicate appraisals of principals by teachers yield information to assess and improve the administrative skills of principals.

Research questions sought information on activities at the state level which served to promote implementation of the state policy. Other research questions sought information on the extent and impact of local school district policies and practices that were consistent with the state policy.

The methodology for the study combined survey research and interviews. The interview methodology was used to collect qualitative information on the efforts of officials at the state level to promote local implementation of the state policy. Mailed surveys were used to collect data on the extent and impact of local school district policies and practices consistent with the state policy.

The results of this study showed that none of the officials interviewed cited any activities at the state level, which promoted the implementation of the state policy. Results of the mailed surveys indicated that only 7% of local school districts had adopted policies on appraisal by subordinates that included the requirements of the state policy. Moreover, only 22% to 29% of school administrators were found to have complied with the requirements of the state policy by giving their subordinates the opportunity to appraise their performance. School personnel in a position to evaluate the effects of appraisal strategies reported that these strategies were beneficial for assessing administrator performance. Some school personnel also reported improvements in administrator performance and the school program, as a result of these appraisal activities. However, elements of the strategy described in state policy neither ensure changes in administrative behavior, nor protect subordinates against reprisals for making the appraisal.

How can the performance of school administrators be improved? Some writers believe that an effective system of administrator evaluation can accurately assess and improve the performance of school administrators (Featherstone & Romano, 1977). Hunt and Buser (1977) have reported that teachers are a major force calling for administrator accountability. Because teachers are being forced to account for their productivity, teachers are demanding that administrators be appraised. Moreover, teachers are demanding the opportunity to provide input into these appraisals.

The current study examined a Washington state policy on appraisal of administrators by subordinates using the public policy process model. Developed in 1976, the Washington state policy requires that certificated subordinates in public schools be given the opportunity to appraise their immediate supervisors. The provision is as follows:

> (3) Each certificated (school) employee shall have the opportunity for confidential conferences with his or her immediate supervisor on no less than two occasions in each school year. Such confidential conference shall have as its sole purpose the aiding of the administrator in his/her professional performance (Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28A.67.066(3)).

The five stages of the public policy process include 1) demands for governmental action, 2) formulation of proposals for public policies, 3) legitimation of policies 4) policy implementation and 5) evaluation of policies (Dye, 1981). The specific focus of this study was the implementation of the

above policy by state and local education personnel.

Recognizing the potential of administrator appraisal for improving school administrator performance, it is important to determine how the Washington state policy on administrator appraisal has been implemented by state officials and local school administrators. It is also important to determine whether the implemented policy achieved its intended effects of improved administrator performance.

Review of Related Literature

Factors Affecting Educational Policy Implementation

How are state educational policies implemented? Institutional theory stresses the roles of legislative and administrative agencies in implementing public policies (Dye, 1981). Dye believes that it is often useful to examine the relationships among these agencies. Because the present study represents a study of state and local educational policy, it is necessary to review studies of the relationships between state and local governmental institutions responsible for educational policy-making.

Dentler (1984) has viewed sharply rising costs, reduced revenues, and sharply divisive political issues as drawing legislators into education policy-making on almost all state and local practices. This increased legislative involvement has resulted in a rate of change that few state education

agencies (SEAs) have been able to control administratively. This rate of change has also resulted in difficulties for local school districts in incorporating legislative policy directives into daily operations.

Dentler notes that state legislation has frequently required changes in educational practices, but presumes that the SEA is capable of enforcing the changes without fiscal support. When fiscal support is not provided in legislation, the probability of implementation is dependent upon SEA technical assistance to LEAs and SEA control over state resources for education.

To promote local compliance with state policy initiatives, Turnbull (1984) asserts that state policy-makers and administrators must provide 1) policy goals which are consistent with local preferences, 2) clear requirements, 3) funding, 4) sanctions for noncompliance, and 5) a policy that remains stable over time.

A review of professional literature in education reveals an example of an educational policy analysis in the State of Washington. Doyle (1980) conducted an analysis of the Washington state Student Learning Objectives (SLO) Law. After his analysis of the law, Doyle concluded that the Washington State Legislature 1) ignored the complexity of policy implementation, 2) provided no funding, 3) failed to allocate rewards for success, 4) did not provide for assistance or training in the development of implementation techniques, and 5) did not adequately provide for local involvement in objective setting.

While some of Doyle's claims are subject to debate, his concerns point out some of the difficulties in implementing state legislated policies. A notable omission in Doyle's analysis was the role of the SEA in disseminating information and facilitating implementation of the SLO law. This role might include responsibility for establishing 1) minimum standards, 2) administrative rules, and 3) technical assistance to LEAs.

In addition to the institutional approach to conceptualizing policy implementation, the influence of competing interest groups has been recognized as influencing policy implementation (Dye, 1981). This approach is referred to as group theory. Proponents of this approach have noted that a policy usually must be actively supported by organized interest groups for the policy to be fully implemented (Sabitier and Mazmanian, 1979). Moreover, Quade (1982) notes that difficulties with implementation are likely to be encountered, whenever an external solution is imposed without the participation of those affected by the policy. Powerful interest groups in education include teacher unions, parent groups, school boards associations, and school administrator professional associations.

The Appraisal of School Administrators

From a review of the literature on administrator appraisal has been found that if administrator evaluation is carried out by a school district, the evaluation is typically carried out in a superficial manner by one person--the superintendent

(Hunt & Buser, 1977). Licata (1980) observes that appraisal of administrators is rarely oriented to foster and guide the professional development of school administrators. Moreover, no provisions are typically made for follow-up or support to foster application of newly acquired skills (Licata, 1980).

How can administrator appraisal practices be made more useful? A number of writers argue that information from subordinates should be a prime source for guiding the administrators' self-improvement (Bailey, 1984; Licata, 1980). Weldy (1960) has observed that teacher appraisals of administrators can result in improved administrative performance, if the teacher has a responsible and constructive attitude and the administrator is sincerely interested in improvement. A number of researchers believe that school personnel affected by the decisions of an administrator may be in a better position to appraise the results of administrative performance, than the administrator's supervisor (Featherstone and Romano, 1977; Solomon, 1983). Chamberlin (1980) believes that teacher feedback assists the principal in 1) building greater rapport with his/her staff and 2) providing information on faculty perceptions of school needs.

Rainey (1983) has found such facets of democratic leadership as supportiveness, openness, informality, and trust are related to positive organizational outcomes. These positive outcomes include 1) more accurate communication, 2) increased initiative and spontaneity, which improve problem-solving skills of the subordinates, 3) greater production and improved

work quality and 4) greater commitment to organizational goals. It is believed that the solicitation of input from teachers serves as one component of a democratic leadership style. The solicitation of teacher input may also reap some of the benefits of the democratic leadership style. This contention is supported by Solomon (1983), who has found that teacher feedback may better the principal's administrative skills and improve the work climate of the school.

Beaubier and Thayer (1973) recognize that it is advisable for a leader to check his/her intuitions about the effectiveness of the school organization. They advise against an informal, subjective method that might result in selective, biased perceptions. Instead, they believe that a more objective and formal assessment of subordinate attitudes might serve to 1) validate the leader's perceptions and 2) provide the leader with insights into potential and actual problem areas.

In order for administrators to know teachers' perceptions of organizational needs, administrators must give teachers the opportunities to express their beliefs. However, studies of teacher attitudes have revealed teachers believe that they do not have the opportunity to express opinions or concerns about school issues (Valentine, 1981).

Regarding problems associated with appraisal by subordinates, Weldy (1960) and Martin (1979) noted that anonymous appraisals by teachers resulted in difficulties responding to complaints. While the appraisal gave the teachers the oppor-

tunity to express complaints that might not be exposed otherwise, Weldy found that some disgruntled teachers were given one more opportunity to "let off steam." In Martin's (1979) study, supervisors participating in the appraisals concluded that the subordinates could not remain objective while evaluating their supervisor. However, Martin asked, "Can supervisors really be any more objective while evaluating employees than employees can be while evaluating supervisors?" (p. 27).

Focus of the Present Study

In analyzing the state policy on appraisal of school administrators by subordinates, research questions were directed toward studying activities occurring at the implementation stage of the policy process. Information was sought that described activities occurring at the state level which contributed to the local implementation of the policy on appraisal by subordinates. A study of the local school district response to the state policy included an examination of 1) the extent of local school district policy adoption consistent with state policy and 2) the extent of local school administrator implementation of the strategy of giving subordinates the opportunity to appraise.

In order to determine whether the effects of policy implementation were due to the strategy of giving the opportunity to appraise or actual appraisal activities, it was necessary to determine whether school personnel actually appraised supervisor performance, when given the opportunity.

The impact of the appraisal strategy was determined by asking school personnel their opinions on the effects of implementing this strategy. In order to determine the extent and impact of implementation activities, the following research questions were asked:

1. What actions were taken by educational personnel at the state level to insure that the state policy on appraisal of school administrators by subordinates was implemented by local school districts and school administrators?

2. To what extent have local school districts adopted policies governing school administrator appraisal by certificated subordinates in conformance with state policy?

3. To what extent have school administrators given their subordinates the opportunity to appraise their administrative performance, as required by state law?

4. When given the opportunity to appraise, as required by state law, to what extent do certificated subordinates actually appraise their supervisor's performance?

5. When the strategy described in state policy is implemented, what are the attitudes of professional school personnel toward the appraisal of school administrators by their certificated subordinates?

Methods

The method of this study combined interviews and mailed surveys to attempt to answer the research questions on policy implementation. The interview methodology served as a vehicle for assessing efforts to implement the policy by state level officials (method 1). The survey methodology was used to determine the effects of state level activities on policies

and practices at the local levels (method 2 & 3).

Method 1: Interviews of State Level Officials

Subjects. The subjects were six officials in government and associations at the state level. These officials included individuals in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), associations of education professionals, and the Senate Education Committee. Officials in OSPI included the Director of Professional Education and the Agency Rules Analyst. In education professional associations, officials included representatives of the Washington Education Association (WEA), Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), and Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). These officials were chosen on the basis of their experience in professional association relations with education policy-making bodies. The staff coordinator for the Senate Education Committee was also interviewed to obtain information from the perspective of the legislature.

Instruments. The protocol used in the interviews of the state officials was constructed by the investigator to obtain information about the officials' 1) communications with other state governmental units, 2) involvement in the state education policy process generally, and 3) actions to promote the implementation of the state policy on the appraisal of administrators by subordinates.

The validity of interview questions for the collection of qualitative data was based upon the content of the ques-

tions. Content validity was established by using questions that directly sought information from officials on the actions they had taken to implement the state policy. Other questions directly sought information on the officials' involvement in the policy process and interactions with other education agencies. In another attempt to improve the validity of interview questions, items were examined by an official at the state education agency, who was not interviewed for the collection of data for this study. The questions were examined to determine the appropriateness of the questions to obtain desired information. Some questions were modified based upon this consultation.

Procedure. In June of 1986, the state officials were interviewed by the investigator. Each interview was conducted at the official's office. After the official responded to each interview question, probes were sometimes used to have the official clarify their answer. With the official's prior approval, each interview was audiotaped to ensure the reliability of information obtained from the written protocol.

Method 2: Survey of Local Policy Adoption

Subjects. The subjects for the study of local policy adoption were respondents to a survey of 100 school districts in the State of Washington. The school districts were chosen at random from a directory of school districts in the State of Washington (Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1985). Each district in the directory was assigned a number and selected

on the basis of a table of random numbers provided by Myers (1972).

Instruments. The survey sent to the school districts was developed by the investigator to determine the extent to which local school boards have adopted policies that are consistent with state policy on appraisal by subordinates.

The validity of the survey is based upon the content of the single question used in this survey. This question directly addressed the second research question by asking the district representative whether the district had a policy pursuant to the state policy.

Procedure. In June of 1986, the survey was sent to the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel for each of the school districts selected. If no Assistant Superintendent for Personnel was listed for the district in the directory of administrative staff, the survey was sent to the district Superintendent of Schools.

Method 3: Survey of Local School Personnel Regarding Strategy Implementation

Subjects. The subjects were the respondents to a survey distributed to 200 school administrators in the State of Washington. The following numbers of administrators were randomly selected: 40 superintendents of schools and 160 middle level administrators. The middle level administrators included elementary and secondary school principals and special education administrators.

The subjects were also the respondents to a survey distributed to 160 public school teachers and certificated support personnel in the State of Washington. Because lists of names of teachers and support staff were unavailable for personnel state-wide, the sampling of teacher and support staff was limited to a region in southwest Washington. Demographically, southwest Washington did not differ greatly from the state as a whole on such variables as urbanization or median income levels. The administrators, teachers, and support personnel were chosen by assigning all individuals a number and selecting each person based upon a list of random numbers provided in Myers (1972).

Instruments. The surveys sent to school personnel were designed to assess directly whether subordinates were given the opportunity to appraise their supervisor's performance, using a yes/no question (research question #3). Both subordinates and unmatched supervisors were asked this question.

If involved in the opportunity to appraise pursuant to state law, the survey directly asked the respondent to indicated in a yes/no format whether subordinates actually appraise their supervisor's performance (research question #4). In cases where subordinates were given the opportunity to appraise, the survey directly asked for reasons for this activity using an open-ended question. In cases where subordinates were given the opportunity to appraise, the survey also directly asked the school personnel to identify problems and benefits with this appraisal activity, using open-ended ques-

tions (research question #5).

Again, the validity of the surveys was founded upon the content of the questions used. The survey questions were similar to the research questions in content. The validity of these questions was enhanced by using an earlier draft of the survey in a pilot study. In this pilot study, ten school administrators and teachers were asked to comment on the format and clarity of the questions used in the survey. These same individuals were also asked to respond to the questions of the survey, in order to determine whether items elicited relevant responses. Survey items were revised based upon the input of these school personnel.

Procedure. To collect information to answer research questions three through five, the surveys were distributed to school personnel by mail in May and June of 1986.

Results

State Level Efforts to Implement the Policy

The first research question sought to determine what actions had been taken at the state level to implement the state policy on appraisal by subordinates. Qualitative data obtained from the interviews of state level officials did not reveal any activities that might contribute to local implementation of the state policy on appraisal by subordinates. Instead, the interviews generated speculation from some offi-

cials that the WEA might promote the implementation of the state policy. However, a high ranking official of the WEA was neither aware of the state policy nor in support of the policy.

The Director of the Professional Education Office at the state education agency (Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, OSPI) is responsible for monitoring implementation of the School Personnel Evaluation Statute, of which the state policy on appraisal by subordinates is a part. This individual stated that he was unaware of any activities designed to implement the state policy. His responses to interview questions indicated that his office had insufficient manpower to ensure the comprehensive implementation of the School Personnel Evaluation Statute by local school districts. Instead, his office solicited reports from school districts, which requested information on whether the school district complied with a limited number of basic provisions of the School Personnel Evaluation Statute. However, these reports did not request information from school districts regarding the state policy on appraisal by subordinates.

Local District Policy Adoption to Promote Implementation

While the first research question addressed implementation of the state policy at the state level, the second research question was directed toward assessing policy implementation at the local level. Of the 100 districts surveyed, 74% responded to the survey (n = 74). Of the those districts

responding, 7% of the districts (n = 5) indicated that they had school district policies providing for the appraisal of school administrators by certificated subordinates. The remaining 93% of the respondents (n = 69) indicated that they had no such policy.

Local Personnel Strategy Implementation and Impact

Mailed surveys were used to collect information on research questions relating to the extent and impact of appraisal strategy implementation by local school district personnel. To determine the representativeness of the samples of school personnel, an examination of response rates to the mailed surveys was necessary. The following percentages reflect the proportion of individuals who responded to the survey: 55% of the superintendent group, 40% of the middle level administrator group, and 63% of the teacher and support staff group.

Data for the third research question was collected from school personnel, who indicated whether they or their supervisor had been involved in the strategy of appraisal by subordinates, pursuant to state law. The percentages of respondents reporting that they had been given the opportunity to appraise consistent with the state policy are contained in Table 1. These percentages are divided on the basis of whether they are reporting about their own behavior or their supervisor's behavior.

TABLE 1

RATES OF OPPORTUNITY TO APPRAISE

A. Supervisor Self-Reported Rates of Opportunity to Appraise ("What I do.")

Survey Type	Implementation Rate n	%
1. Superintendent	5	22%
2. Middle Level Administrator	17	29%

B. Subordinate Reported Rates of Opportunity to Appraise ("What my supervisor does.")

Survey Type	Implementation Rate n	%
1. Middle Level Administrator	18	29%
2. Teacher and Support Staff	18	18%

To verify levels of opportunity to appraise, rates reported by superintendents were compared to the rates reported by administrators and teachers directly supervised by superintendents. As noted in Table 1, 22% of the superintendents reported that they gave their subordinates the opportunity to appraise. When those directly supervised by superintendents were asked whether their supervisor gave them the opportunity to appraise, 25% percent responded affirmatively.

A similar comparison was made for middle level administrators. While the percentage of middle level administrators implementing the strategy was 29%, those personnel supervised

by middle level administrators reported a 20% implementation rate.

Thus, the results addressing the third research question indicate that about one-quarter of school administrators responding to the survey give their subordinates the opportunity to appraise their performance. Differences between supervisor and subordinate groups on the opportunity to appraise dimension range from 3% to 9%.

Administrators were asked for their reasons for employing an appraisal strategy which was consistent with state policy. A review of the reasons for appraisal activities indicated that none of the administrators reported carrying out appraisal activities to comply with state policy. Instead, reasons for administrator appraisal related to the evaluation and improvement of the administrator's performance or the school program.

Regarding the fourth research question on the extent of actual appraisal, all 22 administrators giving their subordinates the opportunity to appraise reported that at least some of their subordinates actually appraised their performance. For those administrators given the opportunity to appraise by their supervisor, 17 of 18 (94%) reported that they actually appraised their supervisor's performance. Of those teachers and support staff reporting that their supervisor gave them the opportunity to appraise, 10 of 18 (55%) reported that they actually appraised their supervisor's performance.

The fifth research question prompted a qualitative

evaluation of the impact of appraisal by subordinates. The appraisal practice described in state policy was evaluated by those school personnel who had reported that either they or their supervisor had given the opportunity appraise supervisor performance in the manner described in state law.

Five superintendents were in a position to evaluate the effects of giving their subordinates the opportunity to appraise. Responding to the open-ended questions, these individuals provided benefits and problems with appraisal by subordinates. Categories of these benefits and problems and the number (N) of superintendents citing each category are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

SUPERINTENDENT REPORTED BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS WITH THE STRATEGY OF APPRAISAL BY SUBORDINATES

Benefits of Strategy Implementation (Total N=5)	N
a. Assessment of personal and/or professional growth (i.e., develop plan of self-improvement).	5
b. Improvement of superintendent's performance.	3
c. Evaluation of the school program.	2

Problems of Strategy Implementation (Total N=5)	N
Subordinate uneasy or hesitant, because s/he believes the appraisal will hinder his/her success.	1

Twenty-nine middle level administrators were in a position to evaluate the effects of the appraisal strategy. Responding to the open-ended questions of the survey, this group's most frequently reported categories of benefits and problems with appraisal are presented in Table 3. The number (N) of administrators citing each theme is also included in Table 3.

TABLE 3

MIDDLE LEVEL ADMINISTRATOR REPORTED BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS WITH THE STRATEGY OF APPRAISAL BY SUBORDINATES

Benefits of Strategy Implementation (Total N=29)	N
a. Assessment of administrator performance.	16
b. School improvement (i.e., better learning and teaching environment, improved teaching performance).	11
c. Increased mutual respect, trust, collegiality, or confidence between supervisor and subordinate.	8
d. Obtain teacher perceptions and concerns.	8
e. Improved problem-solving and decision-making capability, using teacher opinions and expertise.	7
f. Teachers feel ownership or more a part of the school.	5
g. Improvement of administrator performance.	5
h. Better or more honest, open communication.	4

Problems of Strategy Implementation (Total N=29)	N
a. Subordinates intimidated, fearful.	5
b. Difficult to be completely candid and honest.	4
c. Negative appraisals from subordinates.	3
d. Insufficient time to carry out this activity.	3

For teachers and support staff reporting that their supervisor had implemented the appraisal strategy, benefits of strategy implementation were divided into two groups. These groups included 1) ten subordinates who actually appraised their supervisor's performance and 2) eight subordinates who were given the opportunity, but chose not to appraise their supervisor's performance. The same division was made for the problems of strategy implementation. The most frequently reported categories of benefits and problems with strategy implementation and the number (N) of school personnel citing each are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4

TEACHER AND SUPPORT STAFF REPORTED BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS WITH THE STRATEGY OF APPRAISAL BY SUBORDINATES

BENEFITS OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION	
1. Teachers who actually appraised their supervisor. (Total N=10)	N
a. Able to change things for the better (i.e., improved school program, improved communication).	7
b. Provides the opportunity to praise them for the things that they do well.	2
2. Teachers choosing not to appraise. (Total N=8)	N
a. Appreciate the chance.	4
b. Possibly increases administrator awareness of certain issues related to their job performance.	2

TABLE 4 (continued)

PROBLEMS OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION	
1. Teachers who actually appraised their supervisor. (Total N=10)	N
a. No effect on administrator performance. No follow-up on teacher suggestions.	3
b. Can be harmful, if you are too critical.	2
2. Teachers choosing not to appraise. (Total N=8)	N
a. Do not feel comfortable, feel threatened or intimidated by administrator.	2

Discussion

Relationship of Findings to Theory and Past Research

1. State Level Implementation. From the information collected from state level officials, the state level implementation of the state policy on appraisal by subordinates was not initiated. The failure to initiate policy implementation may have been caused by a number of factors. First, a lack of inter-institutional communication on the content of the state policy may have contributed to the failed implementation. The legislature apparently failed to take actions to promote implementation of the state policy by OSPI. OSPI was not encouraged by the legislature to implement the state policy through informal communications, administrative rule-making

authority, or the allocation of revenues to administer the policy. These obstacles to policy implementation are consistent with those previously cited by other researchers (i.e., Dentler, 1984; Doyle, 1980; Turnbull, 1984). The office in the state education agency responsible for policy implementation appeared to defer to local control, apparently because of limited resources and the low priority placed on this policy within the School Personnel Evaluation Statute. The failure to make this state policy a high priority by asking for compliance information from local school districts suggests that state level officials did not recognize the potential importance of this policy in improving the quality of education. Even though the state policy explicitly identifies the purpose of the policy as being the improvement of administrative performance, an impression inferred from some of the officials' interview responses was that the state policy would promote polarization between teacher and administrator groups.

The absence of interest group support for policy implementation may also account for the failure to encourage the comprehensive implementation of the state policy at the local level. The lack of WEA support appears to have been critical to the failure to implement this policy. The importance of the interest group in promoting policy implementation has been noted by a number of writers in the area of public policy analysis (i.e., Dye, 1981; Quade, 1982; Sabitier & Mazmanian, 1979).

2. Local Level Implementation and Impact. In addressing

the second research question, the results strongly indicate that local school districts have not adopted policies, which are consistent with the legislative policy on appraisal by subordinates. It is suspected that the impetus for local policy adoption in those districts reporting adoption was the discovery of the state policy in statute by a school administrator or district lawyer. To facilitate integration of appraisal by subordinates into administrative procedures, the local school district policy was adopted. However, local adoption may not have been in response to the legislative policy. An alternate reason for local policy adoption may have been school board or teacher association interest in promoting free information flow between administrators and teachers. Regardless of the impetus for local policy adoption, it does not appear that a concerted effort was made to develop local school district policies in response to the state policy.

In relation to the third research question, the surveys of school personnel indicate that only a small percentage of school administrators have implemented the strategy of giving their subordinates the opportunity to appraise pursuant to state policy. The failure of administrators to cite the state policy as a rationale for appraisal activities reinforces the contention that the legislative initiative had little or no influence on administrator behavior. Instead, the primary reasons for carrying out appraisal activities appears to be for 1) the administrators' personal and professional growth and 2) the improvement of the school program.

The fourth research question was designed to assess whether the effects of the strategy were due to 1) the opportunity to appraise alone or due to 2) the opportunity and the appraisal. Because all administrators either giving or given the opportunity to appraise reported involvement in appraisal activities, strategy impact for this group can be attributed to the opportunity to appraise and the actual appraisal. However, because not all teachers and support staff agreed to appraise their supervisor's performance, the benefits and problems cited this group must be attributed differentially. For those choosing not to appraise, benefits and problems can only be attributed to the opportunity to appraise. For those appraising supervisor performance, the impact of the strategy can be assigned both to the opportunity and actual appraisal.

From a review of the results from the fifth research question, several findings are notable. In line with past researchers' recommendations for using subordinate appraisal information (i.e., Licata, 1980; Solomon, 1983), school administrators in this study were able to develop a plan of self-improvement in areas identified as weaknesses by their subordinates. A number of school administrators believed that being informed of their strengths by their subordinates helped them better capitalize on these strengths. Several teachers also recognized the appraisal process as being an opportunity to praise administrators for their accomplishments. Some administrators view input from subordinates as an important indicator of organizational effectiveness.

In agreement with Weldy's (1960) finding; school administrators, teachers, and support staff in the present study reported improved administrative performance, as a consequence of appraisal by subordinates. Another benefit of appraisal activities cited by respondents was the creation of better learning environment for students and a better working environment for teachers.

The benefits reported by middle level administrators in the present study support the contention that appraisal by subordinates improves organizational functioning by obtaining benefits associated with a democratic leadership style. As reported by middle level administrators, better communication and rapport between teachers and administrators was observed when subordinates appraise administrative performance. This finding is in agreement with prior reports of Chamberlin (1980) and Solomon (1980) on benefits of appraisal by subordinates. A number of administrators also noted that appraisal by subordinates resulted in more effective problem-solving. Improved problem-solving may result from the administrator's increased awareness of subordinate perceptions on important issues.

Some administrators believed that by asking their subordinates for their opinions of administrative performance, the administrator may show that he values and respects the subordinates' opinions. The request for appraisal information may show that the administrator trusts the subordinates to give an accurate, objective evaluation. Increased communica-

tion, trust, and respect may result in improved morale among the certificated staff.

An examination of the responses of the teachers and support staff allow for a comparison of 1) the benefits associated with being given the opportunity to appraise and 2) the benefits related both to being given the opportunity and actually appraising administrator performance. Those choosing not to appraise appreciate being given the opportunity, but report no substantive benefits in the school environment. However, a number of teachers actually appraising administrator performance report observable improvements in the school environment. Therefore, while the opportunity to appraise may contribute to better relations between teachers and their supervisor, the actual appraisal is probably more effective in producing more widespread and observable benefits in the school environment.

Administrators and teachers reporting involvement in appraisal activities meeting policy requirements also cited problems with this strategy. School personnel reported feelings of intimidation, fear, and discomfort on the part of the subordinate. Related to this problem of anxiety, some administrators reported difficulty getting their subordinates to provide appraisal information. Contrary to prior reports of a negative bias to appraisals of this type (Licata, 1980; Weldy, 1960), only 3 of 22 administrators involved appraisal activities reported negative evaluations of their performance by subordinates.

In explaining these results, the face-to-face, confi-

dential conference procedure described in state policy may foster anxiety in the subordinate and discourage negative evaluations of supervisor performance. This explanation is supported by the finding that some teachers and support staff choosing not to appraise indicate that a reason for their failure to evaluate their supervisor is the anxiety created by this type of appraisal. This explanation is consistent with Martin's (1979) finding that few subordinates appraised supervisor performance, when the identity of the subordinate making the appraisal was known by the supervisor.

The most significant problems cited by teachers who appraised their supervisor's performance was the supervisor's failure to follow-up on subordinate recommendations. This failure to follow-up on appraisal information may actually worsen teacher-administrator relations.

Methodological Problems

Certain methodological problems encountered in this study may limit the certainty and generalizability of the conclusions. In relation to the interviews of state officials, a problem encountered was the ten year period that elapsed between the adoption of the state policy on appraisal by subordinates and the interviews of state officials. The time span between policy adoption and the interviews interfered with the reconstruction of events surrounding policy adoption.

Secondly, the low rate of response to the Survey of Middle Level Administrators may have interfered with an accurate

measurement of local policy implementation and impact. Generalizability of results may be limited, because those responding to the survey may have more positive views on appraisal by subordinates than those failing to respond to the survey.

The relatively low level of appraisal strategy implementation may have also interfered with an accurate view of the merits and problems of this strategy. The small percentage of respondents using this strategy may have resulted in a sample, which was unrepresentative of the general population.

Another problem evident in this study relates to differences between the samples of school personnel. The samples of superintendents and middle level administrators were drawn from the entire State of Washington, while the sample of teachers and support staff was drawn from the southwest region of the state. Even though this difference may have interfered with accurate comparisons between the two groups, the similarity in reported implementation rates may suggest that the differences between these samples may not be great.

Finally, the present study represents an exploratory study on the general practice of appraisal by subordinates, because this study examined only one strategy of appraisal by subordinates. More definitive studies on the general practice of appraisal by subordinates would probably require the study of a variety of techniques for the appraisal of administrators by subordinates. More definitive studies on this topic might also include the use of different measures or criteria to judge the usefulness of appraisal information and activities.

An attempt might be made to isolate various elements of strategies, which appear to create specific benefits in the school setting.

Conclusions

Implications for Policy-Making

The results of the present study have a number of implications for educational policy-making. From the results of the present study, several suggestions could be made to increase the likelihood of comprehensive implementation of the state policy on appraisal by subordinates, as well as other legislative policies. During the formulation of the policy, those proposing the adoption of a state policy should consult with and seek the support of interest groups (i.e., state teachers association) that will actively promote the implementation of the policy. By consulting with interest groups, the contents of the policy can be made more consistent with the objectives of the interest groups. In making policies consistent with the objectives of the interest groups, the groups may be more committed to promoting the implementation of the policy. This commitment would be evident by communications on policy content to local interest group representatives and litigation in response to resistance to the policy. As Quade (1982) contends, difficulties with implementation are likely to be encountered, whenever an external solution is imposed in policy without the participation of those affected

by the policy.

When interest group support is not guaranteed, the provision of revenues to encourage or assist in policy implementation becomes more critical. Without the provision of revenues, clear policy requirements and salient sanctions for failure to comply must be written into policy.

While the focus of the responsibility for promoting implementation of legislative policies has been placed upon state level officials, local school personnel bear ultimate responsibility for implementation of practices consistent with policy. School administrators and teachers should not be the passive recipients of educational policy. Instead, regular reviews and discussions of various elements of state policy can encourage policy implementation that has the greatest positive impact in the school environment.

Implications for Educational Practice

It is believed that changes in the strategy specified in state policy could increase the effectiveness of appraisal by subordinates. The evaluation of the strategy of appraisal by subordinates points out the need for procedures that minimize subordinates' feelings of anxiety. To avoid these feelings and increase subordinate participation in appraisal activities, an anonymously completed written evaluation could be used to appraise supervisor performance. The written evaluation should not only allow for ratings in specific areas of job performance, but should also enable the subordinate to

respond to open-ended questions. The focus of the questionnaire should not be on the criticism of performance. Instead, its focus should be on assessing what is being done well and how to improve performance in several high priority areas. It is believed that the subordinate should have the option of signing the evaluation and the opportunity for a confidential conference to discuss the appraisal with the supervisor. These procedures might enable the supervisor and subordinate to discuss potential solutions to problems described in the written evaluation of supervisor performance. To encourage administrator responsiveness to appraisal, a committee of subordinates could work with the supervisor in using results of written evaluations to develop and assess progress toward work performance goals.

Summary

In conclusion, the results of this exploratory study have provided tentative support for the strategy of appraisal by subordinates, as a method for assessing and improving administrative performance. The findings on the effectiveness of appraisal by subordinates attest to the value of the appraisal strategy, rather than the impact of the state policy initiative.

The failure of many school administrators to implement the strategy described in state policy may represent an impediment to the assessment and improvement of school administration in the State of Washington. The failure to implement the

state policy may have also 1) interfered with the ability of the school administrator to assess the organizational effectiveness of the school and 2) impeded the achievement of organizational benefits associated with a democratic leadership pattern. But, future studies are needed to validate these contentions.

Since Weldy's early study on this topic, the most fundamental elements of a successful appraisal of supervisor performance remain unchanged. The successful appraisal continues to be dependent upon a responsible and constructive attitude on the part of the teacher and a sincere interest in improvement on the part of the supervisor. The primary goal must be the improvement of administrator performance. With this goal, the activity may benefit both the supervisor and the subordinates.

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